

21/04/1997

New Selangor MB picked (HL)

Sa'odah Elias

KLANG, Sun. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to have an audience tomorrow with the Sultan of Selangor at Istana Selangor in Kuala Lumpur to inform the Ruler on who will be the new Menteri Besar.

A Selangor palace official said the meeting is fixed for 3.45pm.

At the meeting, Dr Mahathir will name the successor to Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib who resigned last Monday.

Before the meeting, Dr Mahathir is scheduled to meet with members of the Selangor State Executive Council at the Prime Minister's Department at 2.30pm.

State Assemblymen, however, would not be required to attend the meeting.

Muhammad, who was Menteri Besar since 1986, also vacated his position both as Selangor and Federal Territory Umno liaison committee chairman and Barisan Nasional Selangor and Federal Territory chairman.

However, he retained his post as one of the three Umno vice-presidents and also his seat as Batang Kali Assemblyman.

Muhammad's resignation was announced by Dr Mahathir after he chaired the Umno Supreme Council meeting on April 12.

Muhammad resigned on his own accord after listening to the views of the Supreme Council members who discussed his issue at length during the three-hour meeting.

Muhammad is facing two charges at the Brisbane Magistrate's Court for failing to declare the equivalent of RM2.4 million while leaving Brisbane International Airport for New Zealand on Dec 22 last year and for making a false declaration.

In addition, Muhammad is the subject of an Anti-Corruption Agency investigation after the Brisbane Courier Mail reported that that Muhammad and his wife, Puan Sri Asbi Rohani Asnan, were building a RM1 million house on a piece of land valued at another RM1 million on Sovereign Islands.

The paper, in its March 29 report, also claimed that three months ago, Muhammad and Asbi had bought a 4,500ha piece of agricultural land in Currajong Park in Western Queensland for RM5 million.

At last Monday's Press conference to announce his resignation, Muhammad flatly denied the Brisbane Courier Mail report, saying that he intended to sue the paper for defamation.

However, the paper reacted by saying that it would stand by its report.

Muhammad vowed to defend himself against what he described as charges that were "technical in nature."

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